A Mahavir Seva Trust Presentation



ol IV

BHAGWAN RISHABHDEV



A complete story of Our First Tirthankar Bhagwan Rishablilev

The three main religions in India are Jain, Buddha and Vaidik (Hindu religion). All these agree that the source of religiousness is many billion years old. As per Jain religion, in the present times, Bhagwan Rishabhdev spread religion for the first time on the earth. In addition to religion, he was the first to give training for agriculture, trade, art, sculpture, politics and government to people. He was the first King of the world, first Shraman (Sanyasi or ascetic) and the first Tirthankar also. That's why he is known as Adinath or "First Tirthankar".

The eldest son of Rishabhdev, Bharat, became the first Chakravarty Samrat. On his name our country became popular as Bharatvarsh.

Bhagwan Rishabhdev was a popular leader as well as a religious leader. For the development of human society, he inspired man for hard work and then also showed the path of retirement for inner peace. After establishing the social administration system and government, he accepted the path of renouncement and set a great example of balance between luxuries and detachment.

In addition to Jain literature, the biography of Bhagwan Rishabhdev is also found in Rugved and Shrimad Bhagvat Puran etc. Finding many similarities between Bhagwan Rishabhdev and Bhagwan Shivshankar, historians wonder whether they are the two different forms of a single great person because both of them had made the development of people their goal in life.

We have presented this biography of Bhagwan Rishabhdev based on the ancient Jain religious books Adi Puran and Trishashti Shalaka Purush.

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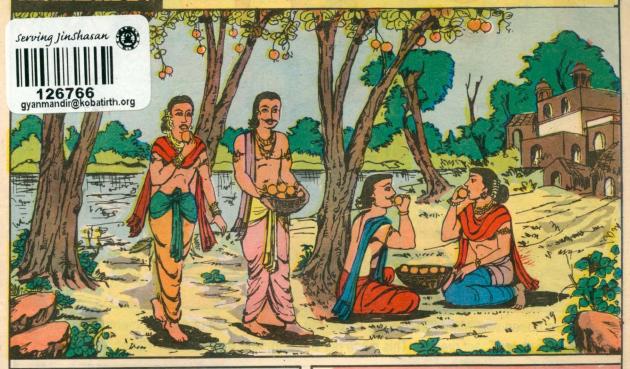
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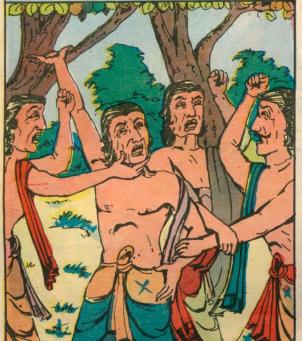
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BHAGWAN RISHABHDEV

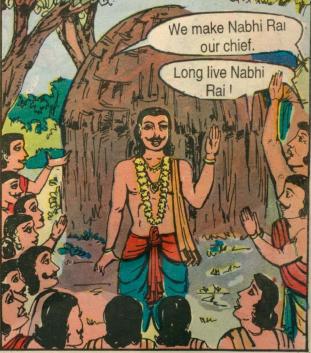
This story is from prehistoric Avaspirni* times when people had few desires. All were happy as their lives were based on truth, morality and contentment. There was no ruler no ruled. All desires were fulfilled by Kalpavruksha**. There was no conflict.



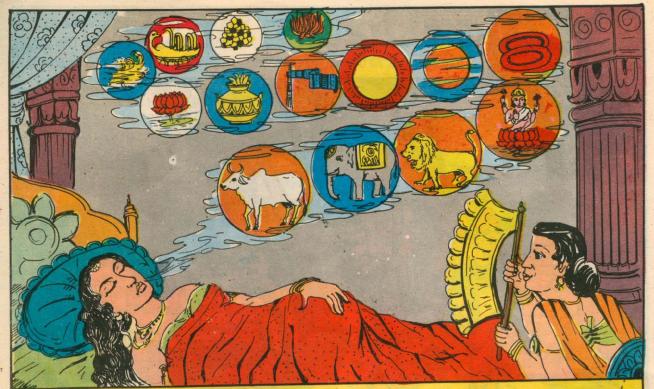
Gradually population increased. Fruits of Kalpavruksha were not enough. Needs increased. This developed friction and conflict.



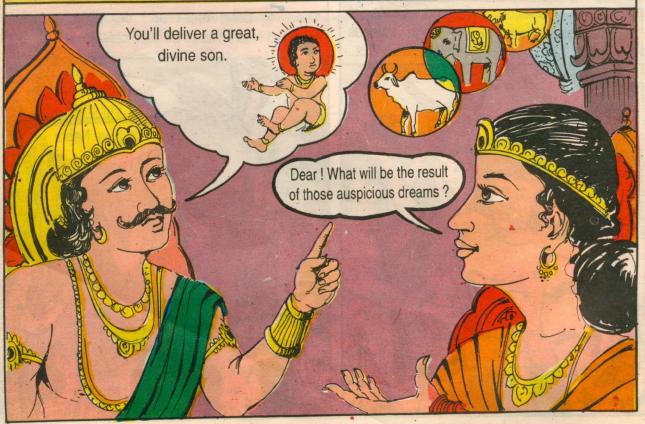
Then, to bring order and discipline, people selected Nabhi Rai to be their chief.



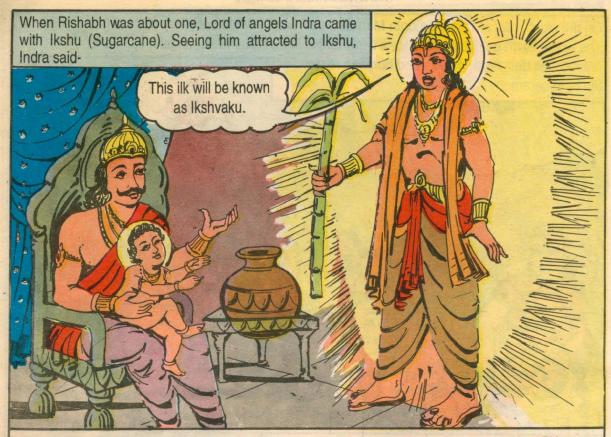
^{*} Avaspirni : Time cycle. ** Kalpavruksha : The divine tree that fulfills all desires.



Nabhi Rai's queen was Marudevi. On the fourth day of the dark half of Ashadh month, she saw 14 auspicious and significant dreams. This made her wake up. She went to Nabhi Rai and said-





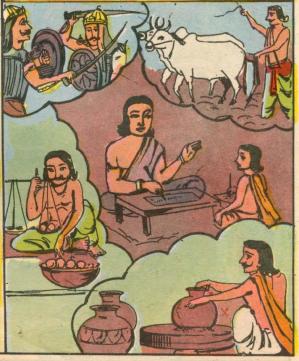


Grown up Rishabh married to two females Sunanda and Sumangala and pioneered the system of marriage.



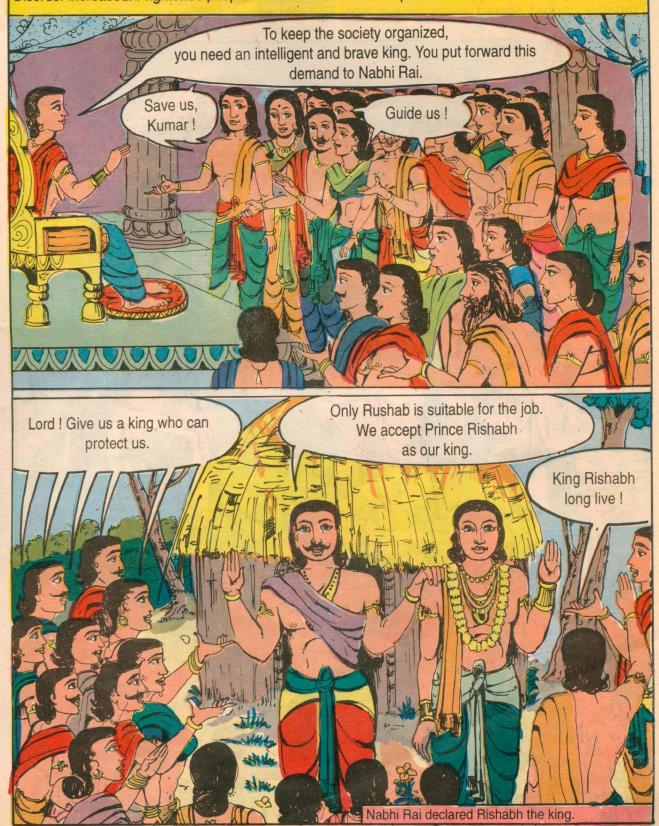
He got Bharat, Bahubali etc. hundred sons and two daughters: Brahmi and Sundari.

He trained people for defence, farming, mathematics, trade and manufacturing of pots etc.

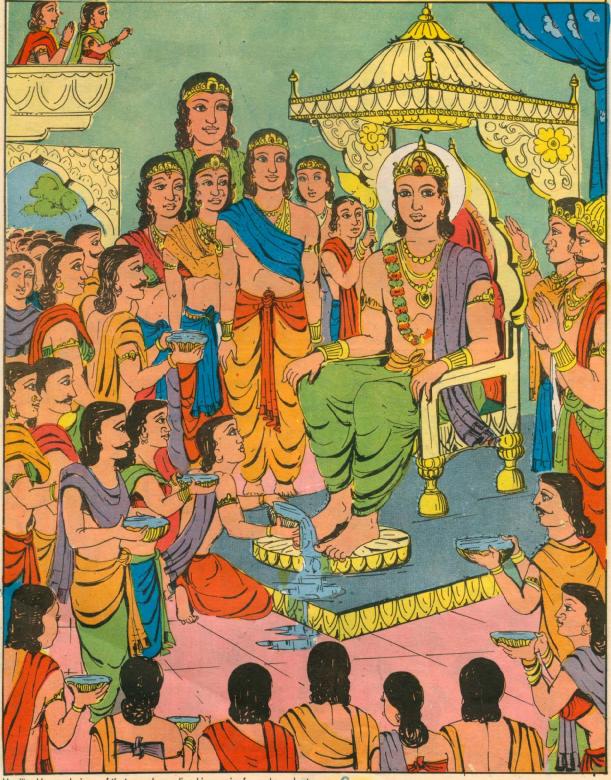


Till the times of Nabhi Rai, man was disciplined and harmless. Gradually, violent ideas crept in.

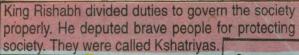
Disorder increased. Frightened people came to Rishabh to complain-

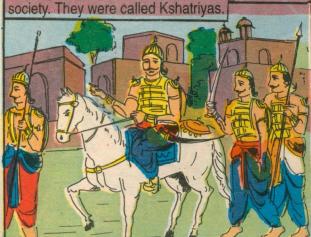


Rishabh's corronation was celebrated. Nabhi Rai and Marudevi blessed their son. All Yugalik* groups, sons-Bharat, Bahubali etc. and daughters- Brahmi, Sundari were present. Yugaliks poured sacred water on his feet. The city where Rishabh stayed was named Vanita.



Ugalik - Human beings of that era always lived in a pair of a male and a temale. 6





Those who were experts in buying and selling were called Vaishyas i.e. traders.



The people who looked after sanitation were called Shudras.



Developing and flourishing the nation, King Rishabh grew older. Once, he thought-

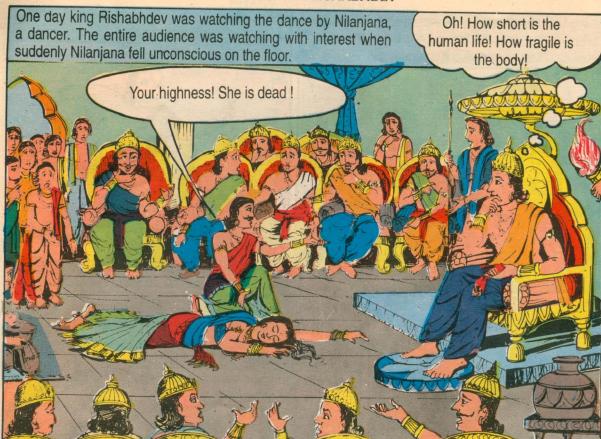
I should handover the state to the sons and be relieved.



Bahubali got Takshashila. After handing over other states to remaining sons, King Rishabh felt relieved.





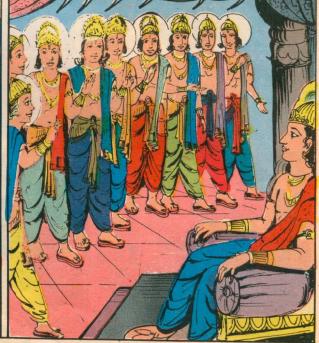


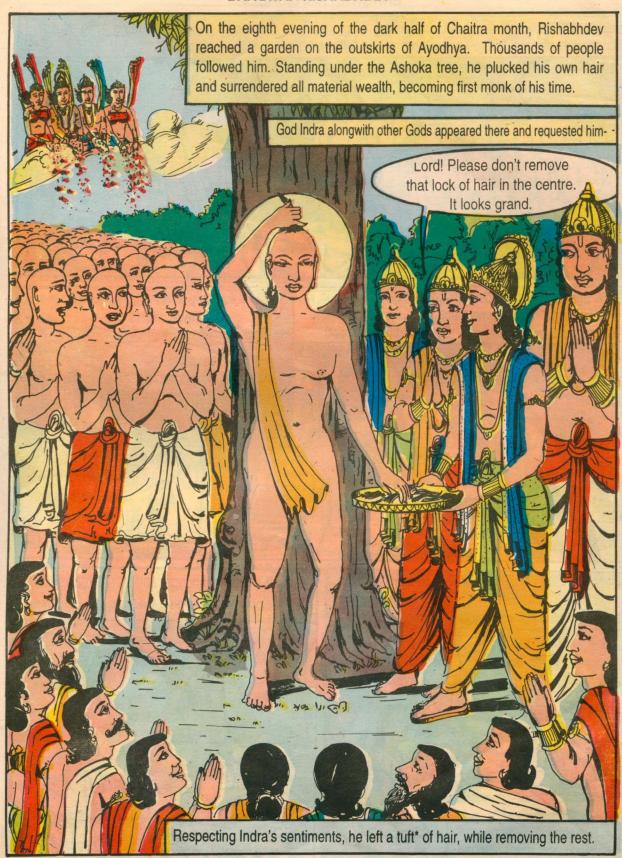
He immediately decided to forsake luxuries and embrace monkhood.

I will relinquish these luxuries, meditate at higher level and win over death.

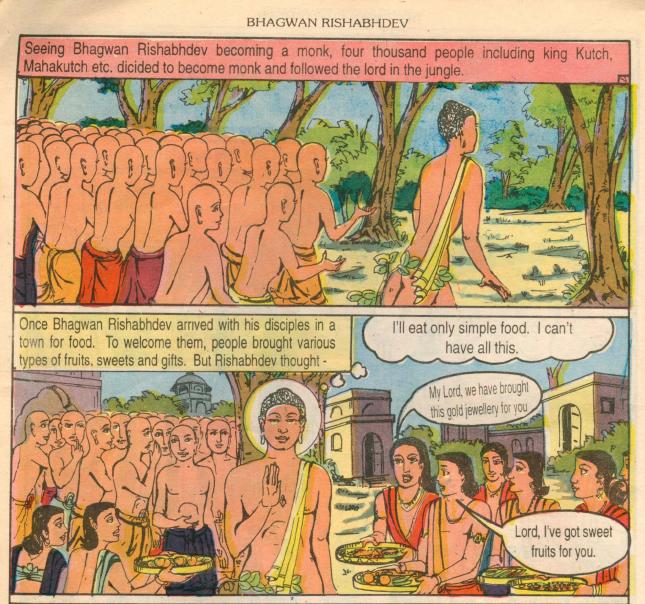
Just then all Gods of nine heavens appeared and said-

O Great Man! Your decision is magnificient. You teach people the path of relinquishing, restrain and discipline.

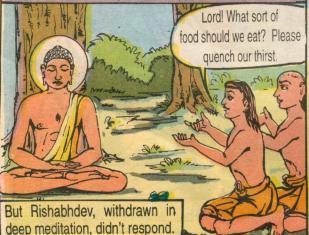




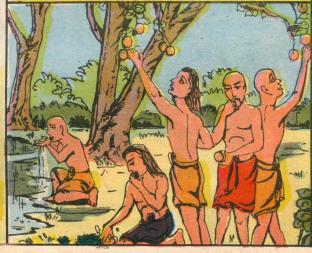
^{*} Because of this tuft of hair he was sometimes known as Keshariyaji or Keshi.

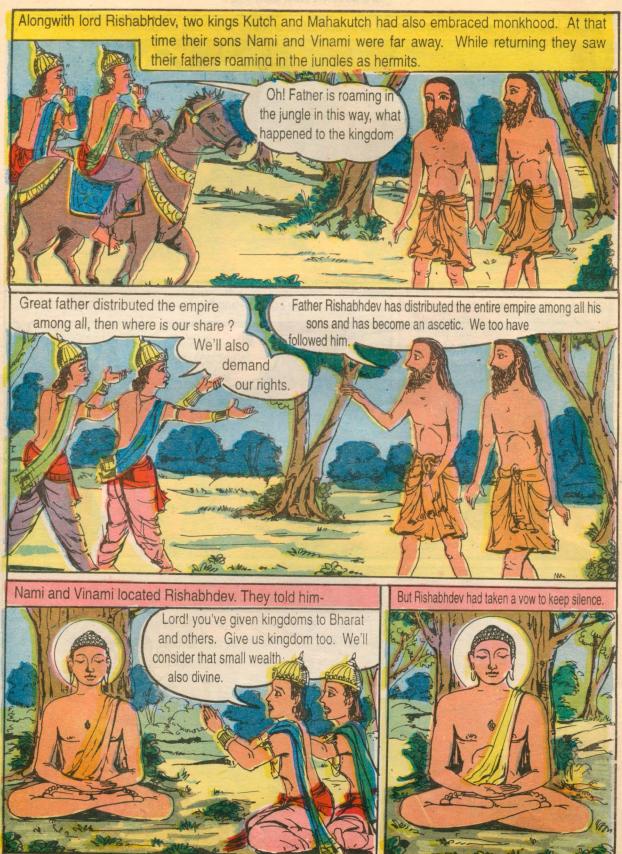


Not getting simple food, Rishabhdev returned back in the jungle hungry and thirsty and dicided to do penance. Due to starvation many disciples approached the lord.



When the pangs of hunger and thirst began severe, the disciples started eating the fruits and legumes.

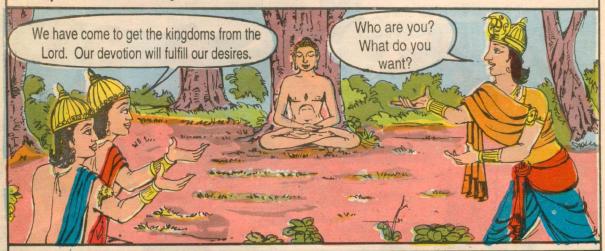


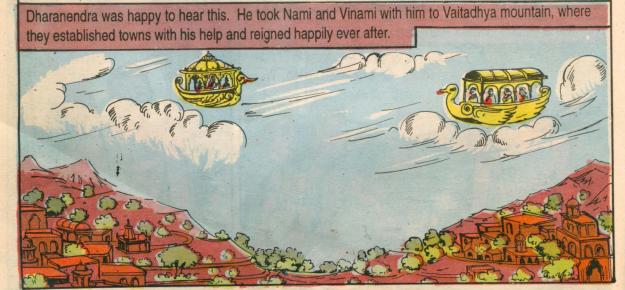


Seeing him silent, both the brothers sat in a meditative worship to please the Lord.



One day Dharanendra, the king of snakes, came to pray the Lord. Seeing the devotion of the princes he asked-





A year after renouncing the world Lord Rishabhdev still did not receive pure food according to rituals. Due to scarcity he had physically become very weak. Travelling through villages, one day, he reached Hastinapur.



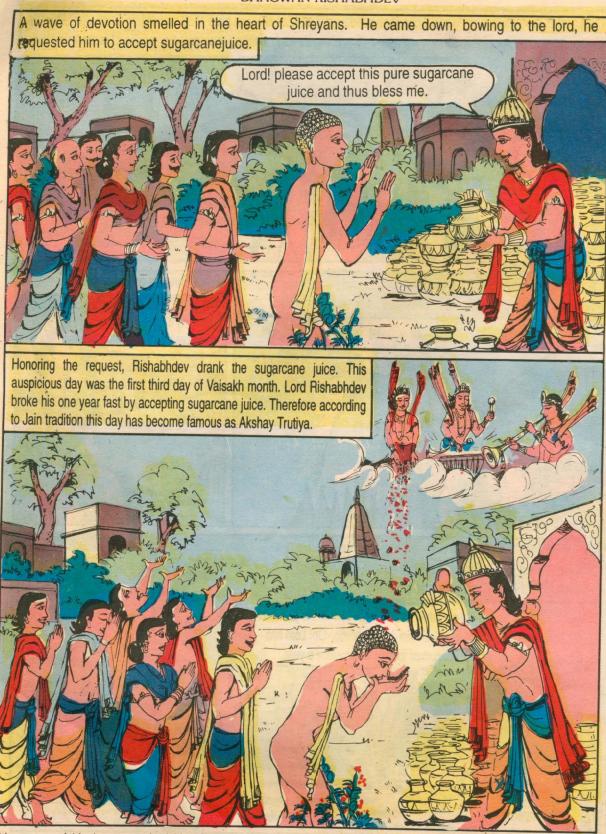
In those days Hastinapur was ruled by king Somprabha. His son prince Shreyans kumar dreamt that night, that he was cleaning dirt filled Meru mountain with amrut(nectar).



Prince Shreyans pondered upon his dream.

Definitely a special gain is to be bestowed upon me.





^{*} In memory of this day even today lakhs of people perform Varsi tap (one year fast-one day eating and next day of fast)

*Taking food after fasts.

On the other side in Ayodhya Rishabhdev's mother Marudevi not receiving any news of her son became restless. She met her grandson Bharat and spoke-



Emperor Bharat sent envoy in all four corners to get news of Rishabhdev. For many days there were no news. Suddenly, one day three messengers entered the Rajsabha.



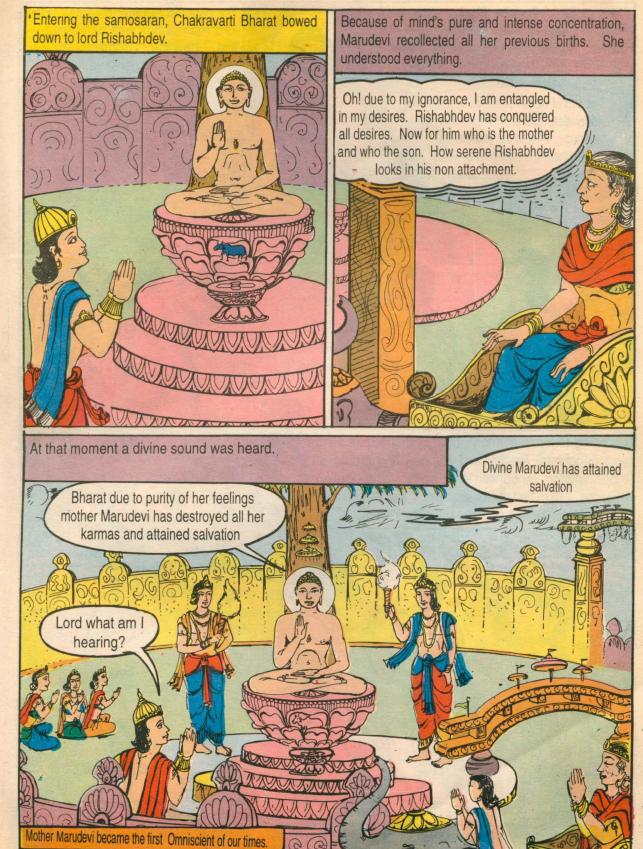


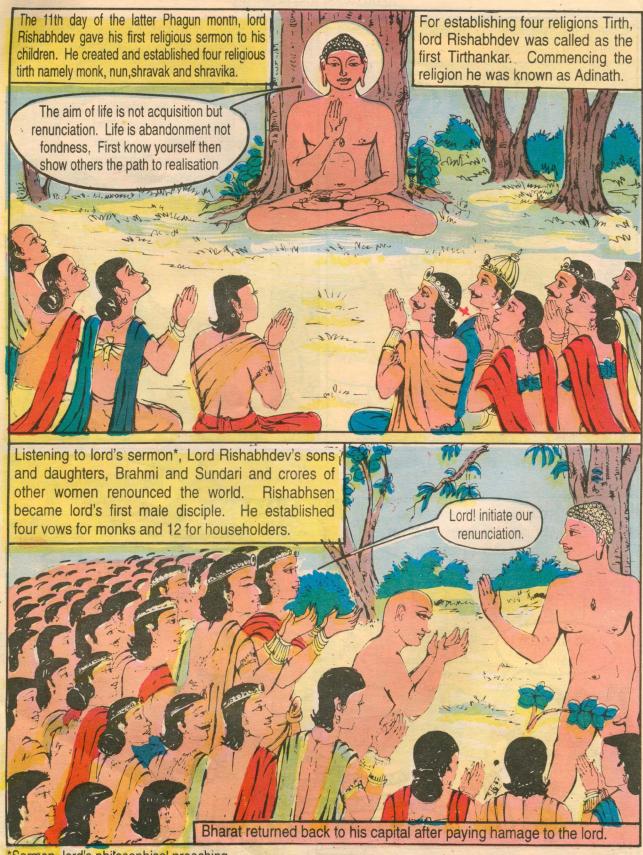
Bharat went alongwith mother Marudevi to worship lord Rishabhdev.



When the procession reached the gates of samosaran, Bharat gave description of Rishabhdev's divinity to Marudevi.







'Sermon- lord's philosophical preaching.

Upon returning from celebrating Lord Rishabhdev's Kevalgyan, emperor Bharat went to his arsenal and performed puja of the bejewelled Chakra.



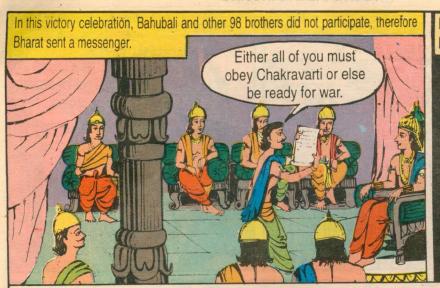


To conquer all states of India, Bharat set out with a huge army for



Years later when Bharat the victor returned back to Ayodhya, they celebrated the conquest. He established six principalities under his realm and thus became the first Chakravarti emperor.





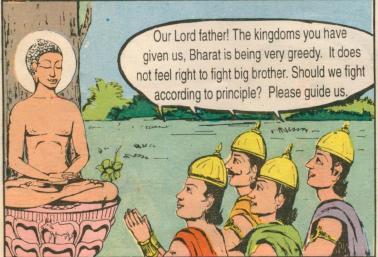
Listening to Bharat's message, all brother had a secret meeting.

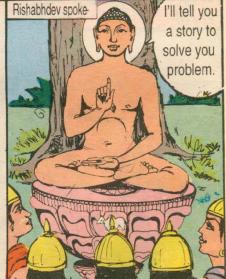
have a war.

We must

We will go to our father and seek his guidance

All brothers went to Lord Rishabhdev.







Lord Rishabhdev starts telling a story— Once there was a foolish woodcutter. He lived by means of cutting wood in the forest everyday.



Once because of an intense heat, he felt an acute thirst. In search of water he ran helter skelter but could not locate water anywhere.

Troubled over his parched throat he laid down in the shadow of a tree and fell asleep, he dreamt-





He went to a well and drank all the water. still he remained thirsty.

He went to the banks of a river and drank up all the water, still his throat was dry.



Inspite of drinking the ocean, he remained unquenched.

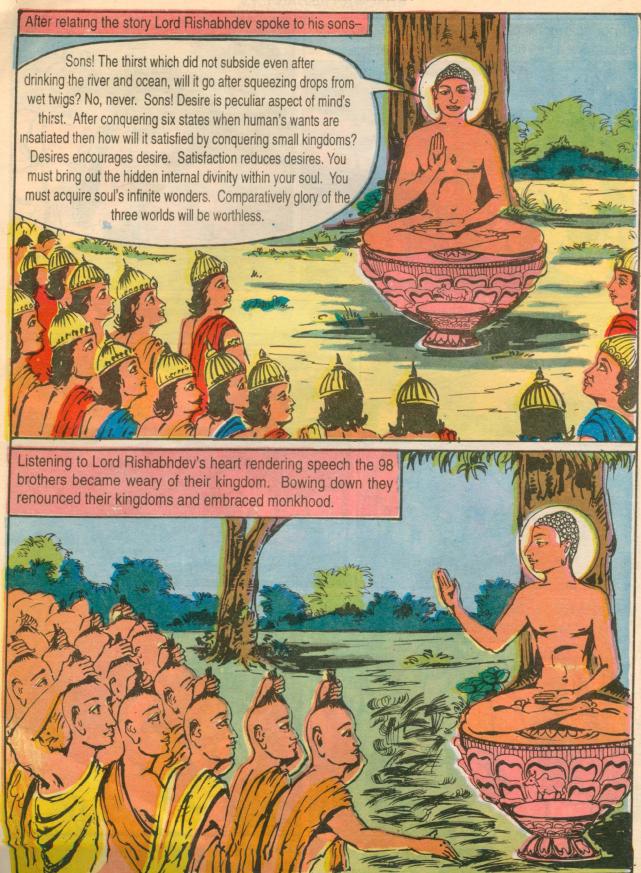


Running here and there for water he came across a wet bunch of twigs. He tried to squeeze out every drop of





Then, with a twist in his arm he awoke, the dream was broken, and the same arid land.





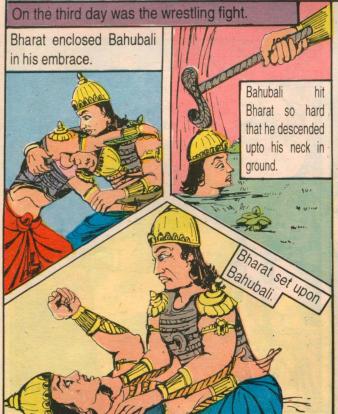


First commenced the war of staring. Bharat and Bahubali started glaring at each other's eyes without blinking their eyelids.



Then there was a war of screaming, their vociferous bellowing scared the life out of horses, elephants etc.







in despair and bitterness, Bharat forgot his limitations and in exasperation he threw his



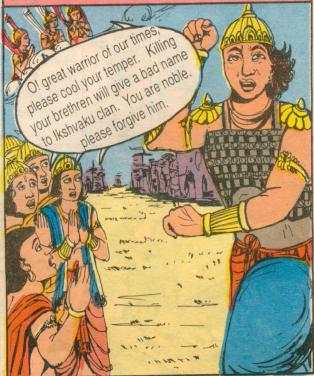
But it was a divine Chakra, it does not kill blood relatives, therefore it circled Bahubali and came back.

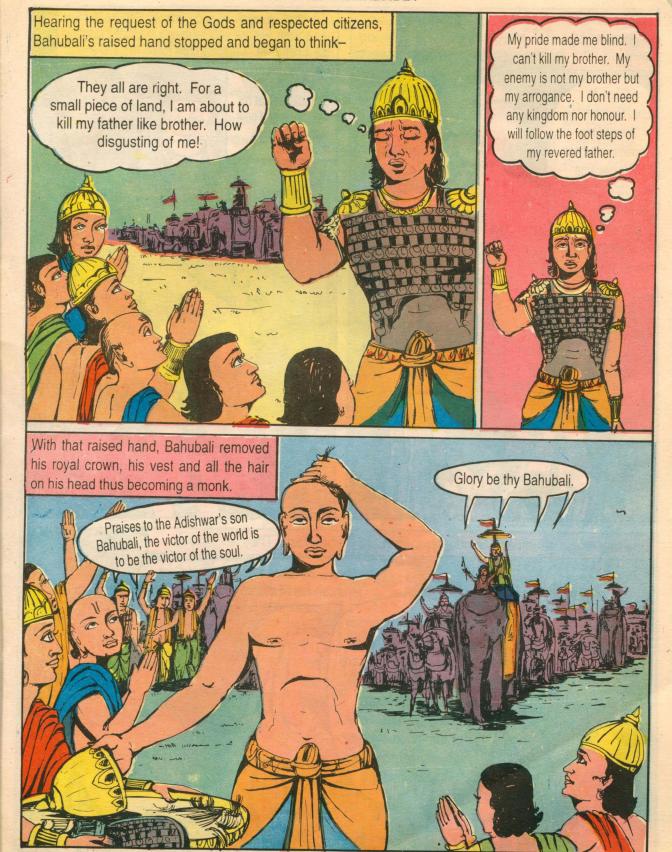


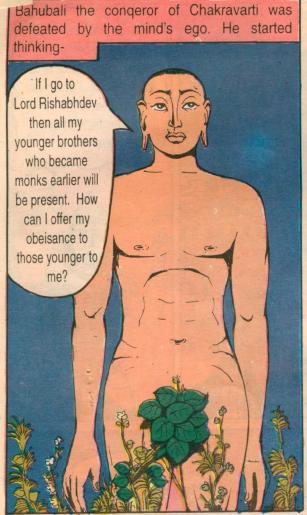
In fury Bahubali raised his fist to strike Bharat. Bharat became alarmed.



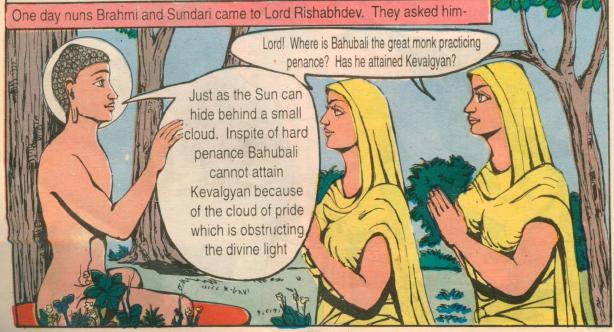
Observing the view, God Indra, other Gods, Ministers, Priests etc came infront of Bahubali and pleaded to him.

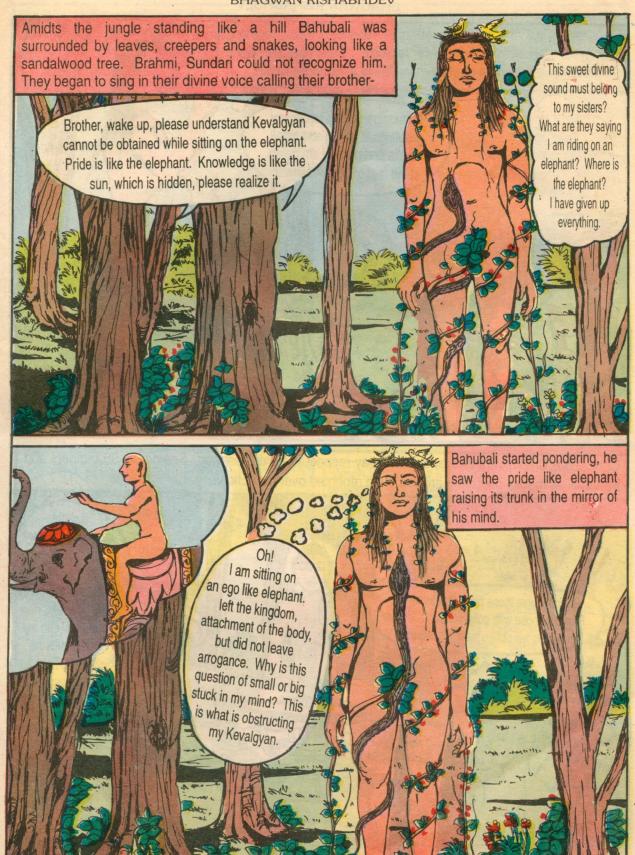


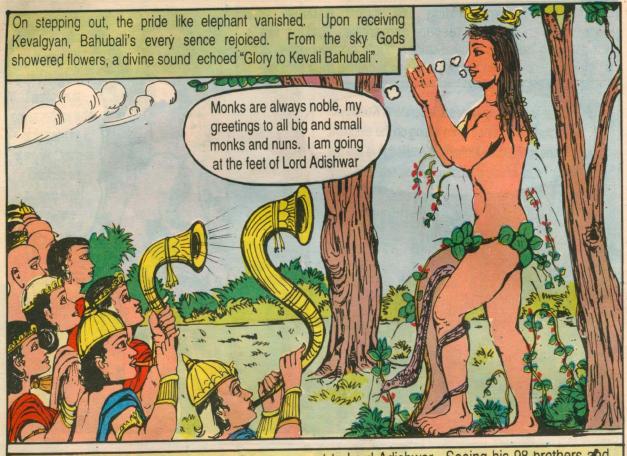




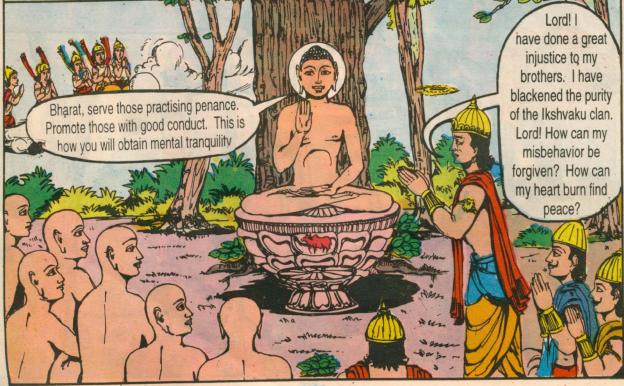








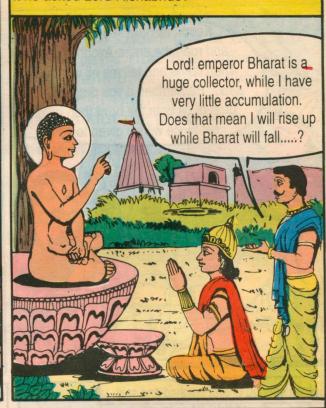
Once more Chakravarti Bharat came to pay respect to Lord Adishwar. Seeing his 98 brothers and Bahubali as monks present there, his mind repented over his actions.



One day Lord Rishabhdev arrived at Ayodhya. Thousands of people alongwith Bharat went to hear his sermon.

Fellow beings, lighten your mind by dispensing the affection for wealth etc. Just as light things rise upward, heavy things go downwards, in the similar manner, the more you have the less you are and the less you have the more you are.

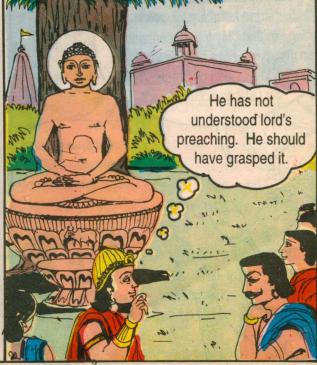
In this religious congregation and policy was present listening to the preaching, upon hearing it he asked Lord Rishabhdev-

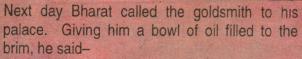


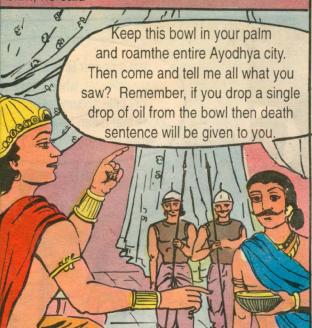
No, its not like that. Bharat is like that lotus being inside a pond, but still distant, fulfilling his duties. He is not an accumulator.

Partiality in the lord's house too?

When Bharat saw the goldsmith in a perplex state-







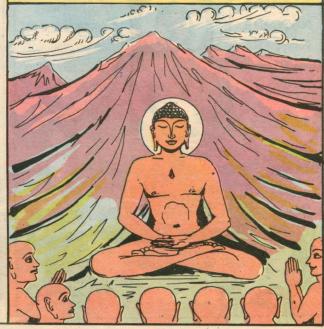
Goldsmith takes the bowl and travels the entire Ayodhya city and returns back to the royal court. Bharat asks him-



Upon hearing Bharat laughed and said-

Did you understand anything?
In this world full of luxury, even I am
living like that. My full concentration is
on my soul. I have nothing to do with
this world's market or streets. Think
am I still an accumulator?

Your highness, please forgive me. I did not fully understand deeply the lord's teachings In this manner teaching the significance of renunciation, forsaking of desires etc took Rishabhdev thousands of years. One day he realised that his end is near. Knowing this he went to Ashtapad mountain and in a state of samadhi attained moksha.



Dear Friends,

By this time you must have gained some knowledge of the Jain philosophy and its technical terms. I am sure that now when your friends ask you about Jainism you will be able to explain to them the meaning of Navkar Mantra or the principle of Ahimsa or what is the theory of Karma. Today let us learn more about the philosophy.

Q. 26. How do we know that the soul exists?

Ans. The existence of any entity can be established by reason, examples and arguments. Let us explore the question further more. Jain philosophy is based on the acceptance of the existence of the soul. If the soul does not exist then why should one work for its liberation? It is therefore very important to prove the existence of the soul.

Some people of reason and education do not accept the existence of the soul. They argue that, "If the soul is not perceptible then how could we accept its existence? Show it actually to us then we are prepared to accept it."

But soul is not a commodity like a book or a pencil which can be shown in hand. Soul is an invisible and formless entity that requires effort to prove its existence. When one exercises one's intelligence and uses its logic it is not difficult to accept its existence.

Is it true that only visible entity is accepted by us as existing? No. We accept the existence of an invisible entity by its visible operative effect. For example, Who can perceive with the eyes the wind, the air? But in summer when a whiff of wind touches the body, one feels cool sensation and one says the cool wind is blowing. This means that the wind is not visible to the eyes and yet we accept its existence through its operation. Similarly the electricity is not seen when the light is turned on or when the iron is heated. But still we accept it. From this it is established that an invisible entity with visible effect or result exists.

Now let us consider whether the effective operation of the soul is visible. When a man dies all his senses are intact and the physical frame remains where it is. The body does not move until moved, the eyes do not open by itself and the body does not react to any kind of

abuse or a punch. What happened? Just a few minutes ago he could do everything. Now all of a sudden everything ceased. Why? Because the one who saw, who felt, who moved, who spoke, who heard, who smelt, who tasted and who could act at will left the body. So it proves that the activity was because of the existence of something else other than the body. That other is the soul or Atma.

When the soul leaves, the body is dead and inactive. So anything that grows, flourishes or moves has life and wherever there is life there is soul e.g. plants, veges, insects, fish, serpents, horses etc. That which does not grow, flourish or move has no life. Hence one sees the growth, the movement and the multiplicity of life but the soul is not seen. So we have to accept the existence of an invisible entity by its visible operative effect. As fire can be inferred from smoke, soul can be inferred from life and all sentient activities.

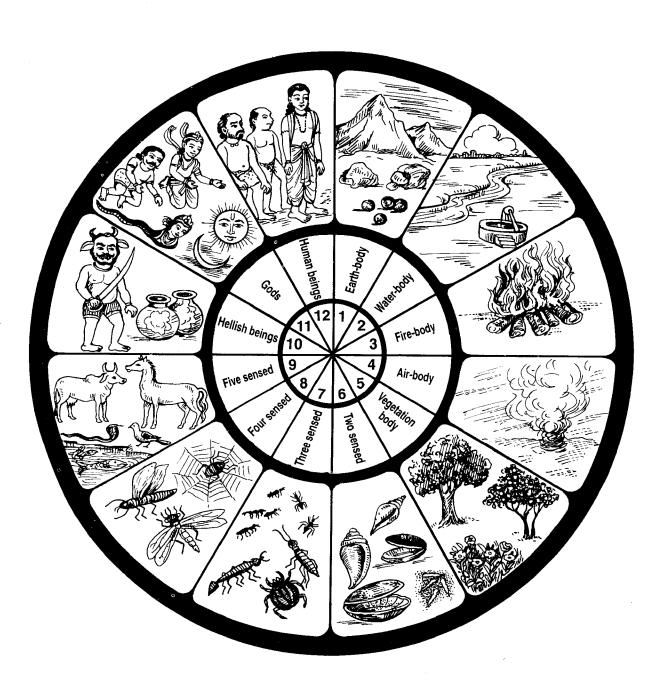
Thus the acceptance of the concept of the existence of the soul is the very fundamental plank in the spiritual journey of self realization and the freedom from bondage.

The broad translation of a poem by Dr. Bharil of Jaipur; summarises the attributes of the living soul. In the poem the soul describes itself in the following way.

"I am self sufficient,
without trace of anything else,
Tasteless, formless,
without colour, without attachment,
without hatred, I am unique,
I am invisible body of consciousness,
happy in my own physique.
I am responsible for my success or failure and none else.
I am pure, omniscient, one unaffected by other's act.
I realise myself through me,
I am knowledge and bliss perfect."

Pramoda Chitrabhanu's Jai Jinendra

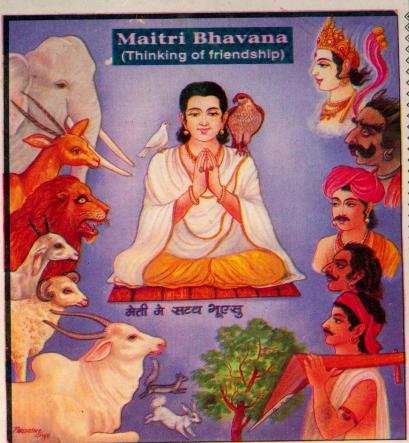
CIRCLE OF WORLD



The soul is continually transmigrating in this Circle of World

Maitri Bhavana (Thinking of friendship)

Lord Mahavira said we must be a friend within all living beings. Feeling of Friendship should be the foundation of all our future thinking. This way once we make friendship someone or for that matter with all living beings how can we think of harming, deceiving or quarreling with them. How can our actions be harsh towards anybody? We would never hurt our friends on the contrary we would support them and protect them. So this way we develop the bond for each other. Friendship teaches us to be tolerant, to forgive and care and share among one another.



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